



July 1, 2006

To SCMS Pedagogy Award committee:

I am writing this letter to support the nomination of Dr. Chuck Kleinhans for the Society for Cinema and Media Studies (SCMS) Teaching Award. I am delighted to learn that Dr. Kleinhans has been nominated, and, given his years of dedication to film education, this honor is long overdue. He is a giant in the field, and I am thrilled to be able to testify to the impact he has had in my life as a teacher and mentor as well as to the contribution he has made to the discipline.

I have known Dr. Kleinhans for almost thirty years, since 1977 when I first enrolled in the graduate program in the Department of Radio-Television-Film at Northwestern University. Even now, I am still inspired by the first lecture he gave in a graduate course on film theory dealing with the importance of Marxism to contemporary film studies. From that moment, I knew I had enrolled in the right graduate program for me. During the quarter, he carefully guided the class through the intricacies of critical theory from Jean-Paul Sartre to feminist film criticism. After the class concluded, he encouraged the women graduate students to continue to develop the then emerging area of feminist film criticism and organize themselves into what became the "Feminar," a group actively devoted to promoting feminist film scholarship. In fact, I do not know of any other film studies professor who has mentored as many women in the profession as Dr. Kleinhans. Not only do his students finish their studies, they get jobs—and this is no small accomplishment given the vicissitudes of academic employment. I honestly feel I would never have accomplished what I have as an educator or a scholar without Dr. Kleinhans as a mentor and role model.

Dr. Kleinhans has always been on the cutting edge of film studies, and he has been a pioneer in introducing new topics in the classroom. For example, it was a great inspiration for me to work with him while I was writing my dissertation on the punk and glitter/glam subcultures. Although there was an emerging body of literature on subculture in the United Kingdom, little had been done on subculture and film anywhere in the world, and Dr. Kleinhans was among the first to look seriously at film in relation to urban subcultures. Even after I completed my doctoral studies, I still attended many of Dr. Kleinhans' lectures on African American cinema and other topics—again, drinking in the intellectually stimulating environment of his classroom.

When my own teaching took me in the direction of queer studies and sexuality, I continued to look to Dr. Kleinhans as a model for working with sexually explicit materials with undergraduate students. His essays and conference presentations on Pamela Anderson, shoe fetishism, and pedagogical approaches to presenting sexual images in the classroom continue to shape my own approach to classes I currently teach (e.g., Feminist Cultural Studies, Questioning Sexual Differences). His work is on my desk and in my mind as I develop on my syllabi each and every semester, and I hope my students, through me, can benefit from his pedagogical acumen.

Dr. Kleinhans and I have continued to work closely together. I am on the editorial board of the journal Jump Cut, which he co-edits with Julia Lesage and John Hess. Over the years, I have been involved with material on the cinema of the PRC, Hong Kong, and the Chinese diaspora for the journal. Again, Dr. Kleinhans has taken a leading role in encouraging the publication of research on Chinese socialist cinema, and he is a pioneer in promoting research on Hong Kong popular film. Certainly, one of the most impressive accomplishments of Jump Cut is its record of publishing work by emerging scholars in neglected areas of study. I published my first academic article in Jump Cut, and I am one of many who took that first step with this journal. It is no easy task to work with a neophyte, and I owe so much to Dr. Kleinhans for encouraging me to publish. Over the years, he has patiently nurtured other young scholars, and Jump Cut continues to welcome new voices in film studies. Few other journals actively seek out, encourage, and carefully edit work by junior scholars, and Dr. Kleinhans' hard work at Jump Cut provides this important service to the field.

As Dr. Kleinhans moves into a phased retirement, this is an excellent opportunity for the entire film studies community to thank him for his contribution to teaching. This expression of gratitude comes not only from his own undergraduate and graduate students, but from so many others in the profession who have been touched by his commitment to social justice and political change. He has changed many of our lives professionally and personally, and I sincerely hope that the Society for Cinema and Media Studies agrees to confer this small token of appreciation for his years of excellence in teaching and commitment to our field.

Sincerely,

Gina Marchetti

